

# **Western Service Area**

## **Initial Safety Assessment 3rd Round - Safety Model QA Review**



**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services  
Quality Assurance**

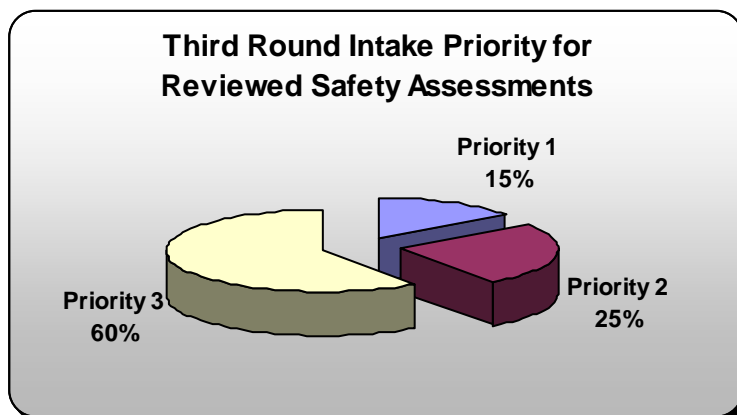
**January 2010**

Quality Assurance Team completed third round of Initial Safety Assessment Reviews for Western Service Area (WSA) in November 2009 through December 2009. Specifically in the part of WSA under the supervision of **Jerrilyn Crankshaw**. For the purposes of this report, throughout this document and related charts, we will refer to this area supervised by Jerrilyn Crankshaw as **WSA\*B**. A total of 20 finalized Safety Assessments were randomly selected by QA staff from four Children and Family Services Supervisors. Review consisted of five assessments from each WSA\*B Supervisor: Brenda Brooks, Kim Seelmeyer, Michelle Eby and Nicole Peterson.

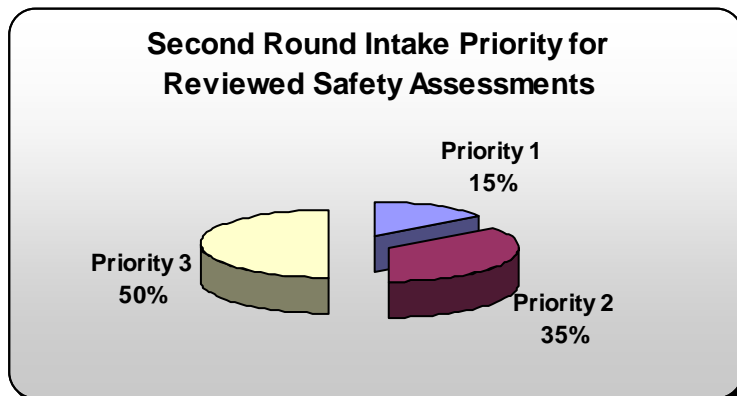
Second round reviews of Initial Safety Assessments were completed in April 2009. A total of 20 finalized safety assessments were randomly selected by QA staff from four Children and Family Services Supervisors in WSA\*B. Review consisted of six assessments from Brenda Brooks, four assessments from Nicole Peterson, and five assessments each from Michelle Eby and Kim Seelmeyer.

First round of reviews of Initial Assessment cases for the Western Service Area (WSA) in September 2008. A total of 60 finalized assessments were submitted to QA staff from four Children and Families Supervisors in WSA\*B. The reviews consisted of 15 assessments from each of the following WSA\*B Supervisors: Brenda Brooks, Kim Seelmeyer, Michelle Eby, and Nicole Peterson.

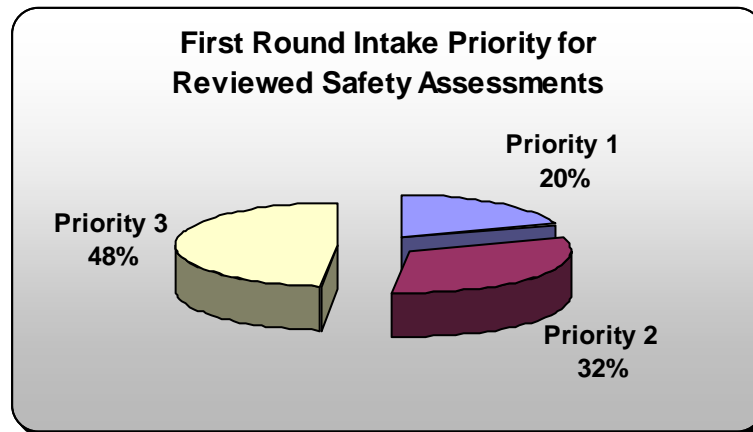
**Third Round: 20 assessments reviewed; 3 were Priority 1, 5 were Priority 2 and 12 were Priority 3.**



**Second Round: 20 assessments reviewed; 3 were Priority 1, 7 were Priority 2 and 10 were Priority 3.**



**First Round: 12 were Priority 1, 19 were Priority 2 and 29 were Priority 3.**



**The following is a summary of Third Round Data from ALL 20 Initial Safety Assessment reviews. Charts for these overall data can be found in the attached excel file: *WSA \*B Safety QA Report.CHARTS.Overall 3rd Round*. Charts in these attachments, compare all Rounds of Initial Safety Assessment Reviews.**

***Initial Response/Contact Information (Chart 1):***

- Initial contact with child victim was made within required time frame in 80% of the Safety Assessments (16 out of 20 instances).
- Other children in the household were present in 6 out of 20 (30%) reviewed assessments. Other children in the home were interviewed in 5 out of 6 instances (83.3%).
- For two children that were not interviewed, reviewers were unable to locate documentation to justify the lack of contact.
- 5 out of 25 reviewed assessments had a non-maltreating caregiver listed in the intake. The non-maltreating caregiver was interviewed in 80% or 4 out of 5 instances.
- Other adults were present in three of the reviewed assessments. 66.7% or 2 out of 3 of these adults were interviewed by workers.
- Interviews with the maltreating caregiver occurred in 100% or 20 out of 20 assessments where a maltreating caregiver was identified.
- Interview protocol was followed in 20% or 4 out of 20 assessments. For those 16 assessments that did not follow protocol, reviewers were able to find documentation to indicate the reason for the deviation from protocol in 2 out of 16 assessments (12.5%).

### ***Present Danger (Chart 2 & 3):***

- Present danger at the initial contact with the child victim and/or family was identified in 1 out of 20 reviewed assessments (5.0%).
- Reviewers agreed with the worker's assessment of Present Danger in 20 out of 20 instances (100%).
  - Reason for the protective action was explained to the parent/caregiver in 0 out of 1 instance (0.0%).
  - While the Immediate Protective Action (IPA) included oversight, 0.0% (0 out of 1) IPA included sufficient oversight requirements to assure child safety.
  - 0.0% (0 out of 1) of the IPA contained parent's willingness to cooperate.
  - 100% (1 out of 1) of the IPA contained a description of the persons responsible for the protective action.
  - 0.0% (0 out of 1) of the IPA taken contained confirmation of person responsible for the protective action (trustworthiness, reliability, commitment, availability and alliance to plan).
  - 0.0% (0 out of 1) of the IPA contained a description of how the protective action was going to work.
  - 100% (1 out of 1) of the IPA contained timeframes for the protective action.
- Overall, the Protective Action Plan was judged to not be sufficient by Reviewers (0.0%).

### ***Domains (Chart 5):***

- **Maltreatment** – Sufficient information was collected in 90.0% (18 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Interview or include information for everyone listed as perpetrators. Include findings/conclusions and evidence to support findings, include removal of child, address all areas of concern in the intake. Caution run on narratives, information needs to be separated into other domain areas.*
- **Nature** – Sufficient information was collected in 85.0% (17 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Information contained in domain is evidence and goes to supporting the finding, therefore should be contained in maltreatment. Include analysis of events/factors surrounding the abuse and neglect. Include pattern of why the abuse and neglect is occurring in the home.*
- **Child Functioning** – Sufficient information was collected in 80.0% (16 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Parents and/or caregivers perceptions of the child. What conclusions can be drawn from the worker's contact with all parties regarding the child's behavior and development? Discuss nature of peer interactions. Worker observation of child (ren), description of overarching statements surrounding child's development or behavioral difficulties. Need to assess all children living in home.*
- **Disciplinary Practices** – Sufficient information was collected in 30.0% (6 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Include situation/purpose and detailed information in which the parent implements discipline for the child(ren), future discipline plans in assessments involving infants, children's statements of discipline in home, patterns of discipline with older children.*

- **General Parenting** – Sufficient information was collected in 50.0% (10 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Routines within the home, include past parenting of children that may have been relinquished or terminated, family activities, parental roles, include parenting for all individuals living in the home if they take role in caring for the children, include how parents have attempted to assist or sought services for a child or children with medical, developmental, educational, behavioral and/or mental health needs.*
- **Adult Functioning** – Sufficient information was collected in 35.0% (7 out of 20) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Need to include all adults living in the home, employment history, community or family supports, Mental Health, Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse information. Discuss the nature of adult relationships within the home (marriage and other relationships).*

#### ***Collateral Source (Chart 5):***

- 17 out of the 20 assessments indicated that information should have been collected from a collateral source. Collateral information was collected in 41.2% or 7 out the 17 assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Incorporate the information gained from collaterals into the assessment. Many times a contact is recorded on the contact sheet but the information gained is not incorporated into the assessment. Suggest workers utilize the narrative portion in the contact sheet to document the family's relationship to the contact.*

***Maternal/Paternal Relatives (Chart 5):*** In October 2008, clarification regarding the identification of relatives regardless of the safety determination was provided to the Children and Family Service Administrators and the Service Area Administrator's. All cases will have relatives identified.

- Maternal relatives were identified in 75.0% of the assessments (15 out of 20).
- Paternal relatives were identified in 45.0% of the assessments (9 out of 20).
  - *Reviewer Comment: Documentation needs to contain at a minimum first name, last name, and location (city & state). Include in documentation parents' refusal to provide extended family information during assessment.*

#### ***ICWA (Chart 5):***

- Information regarding ICWA was obtained in 80.0% of the assessments (16 out of 20).
  - *Reviewer Comments: Workers need to utilize the kinship narrative and include a statement as to how ICWA information was obtained by CFS Specialist. For example, ICWA does not apply to family or N/A. Need to include statement of how the worker learned that it did not apply.*

➤ *Examples:*

- *Per mother/name and father/name child does not meet criteria for ICWA because of the following reason.*
- *Father was asked about enrollment or qualification he may meet in Native American Tribe in which he denied eligibility for him or his son.*
- *According to (parents/name), no Native American Tribal heritage exists within the family.*

***Impending Danger (Charts 4 & 6):***

**Impending Danger at the initial contact with the youth and/or family (Chart 4):** The worker identified impending danger at the initial contact with the child or family in 30.0% or 6 out of the 20 reviewed assessments. **The reviewer agreed with the worker's decision in 95.0% or 19 out of the 20 reviewed assessments.**

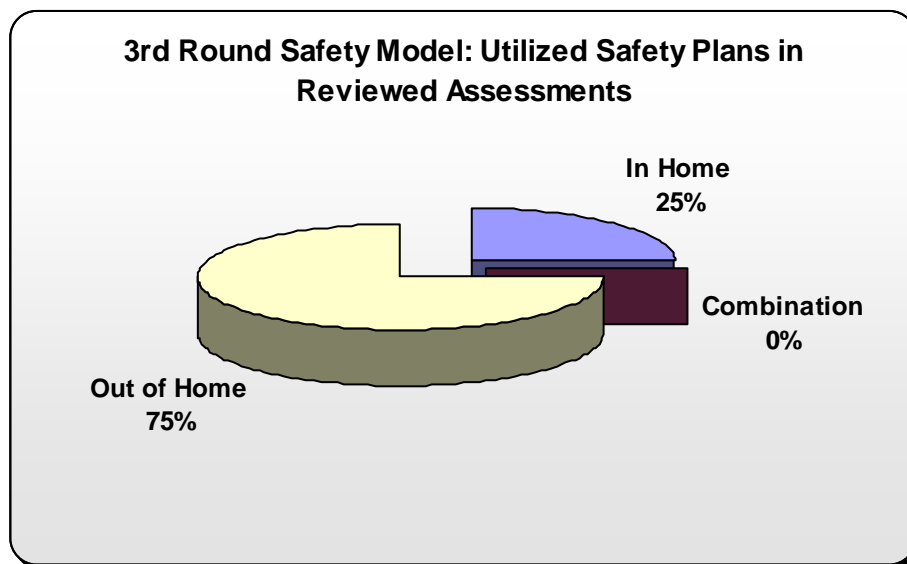
- Although there was not enough information initially to determine impending danger, these Safety Assessments did not rise to the level of Service Area Administrator notification.

**Impending Danger at the end of the Initial Assessment (Chart 6):** The worker identified impending danger at the end of the initial assessment in 8 out of the 20 cases reviewed.

- 8 out of 20 (40.0%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to provide a reasonable understanding of family members and their functioning.
- 8 out of 20 (40.0%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to support and justify decision making.
- 8 out of 20 (40.0%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information in the six domains to accurately assess the 14 factors.
- Safety threats were identified in 8 of the reviewed assessments.
  - In 75.0% or 7 out of 8 of the instances the reviewer agreed with the worker on all of the safety factors identified “yes”.
  - Within the safety factors identified “yes”, 7 out of 8 (87.5%) contained threshold documentation for identification/justification of impending danger.
  - Intake in which reviewer did not feel the identified safety threats contained justification of impending danger;
- In 30.0% or 6 out of 20 assessments, the reviewer agreed with the worker on all of the safety factors identified “no”.
- Safety Assessment Conclusion:
  - The worker determined that the child was UNSAFE at the conclusion of the safety assessment in 8 out 20 (40.0%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker’s decision that the child was UNSAFE in 8 out of the 8 (100.0%) assessments.
  - The worker determined that the child was SAFE in 12 out of 20 (60.0%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker’s decision that the child was SAFE in 5 out of the 12 assessments (41.7%).

### **Safety Plan (Charts 7, 8 & 9):**

- Worker determined that the child was unsafe in 8 out of the 20 (40.0%) reviewed assessments. Safety plans were established at the conclusion of the safety assessment in 8 out of 8 (100%) reviewed assessments.
  - 25.0% or 2 out of 8 safety plans were in-home safety plans. Reviewers thought in 1 out of 6 instances or 16.7% in home safety plan would have been appropriate for Intake;
  - No combination safety plans were utilized. Reviewer thought in 1 out of 8 instances or 12.5%, combination safety plan would have been appropriate for Intake;
  - 75.0% or 6 out of 8 safety plans were out of home safety plans. Reviewers thought in 1 out of 2 instances or 50% out of home safety plan would have been appropriate for Intake;



- 8 out of 8 (100%) safety plans contained a contingency plan; reviewer judged the contingency plan to be appropriate in 0 out of 8 (0.0%) of the reviewed assessments.

### **Examples of sufficient contingency plan:**

*Note: The intent of having a sufficient contingency plan is to have staff think ahead, anticipate situations that might come up and make a plan to deal with them. A good contingency plan is an actual backup plan with names and information of individual(s) that will take over or complete safety actions if the original safety plan participant is unable to do so. A good contingency plan is one that can prevent the need for immediate caseworker notification or action.*

### **For Out of Home Safety Plans:**

1.) If (NAME) approved relative provider is unable to care for the (child/youth), the relative care provider will contact the child's caseworker and the child will be placed with (NAME) another identified and approved relative provider.

2.) If (NAMES) foster parents are unable to care for the (child/youth), the foster parents will contact the child's caseworker and the child will be placed with (NAME) identified respite care provider or (NAME) identified traditional or agency foster care provider.



### **For IN Home Safety Plans:**

1.) If (NAME) relative safety plan provider is unable to be at (NAME) family home as expected from 4-6pm. Then (NAME) will contact (NAME) another relative safety plan participant who will substitute for them during that time. If both are unavailable due to a family emergency then (NAME) the pastor's wife will substitute for them during that time.

2.) If (NAME) a contractor providing safety services for the family is unable to do what they agreed to do, they will notify the caseworker and (NAME) another safety service contractor will be utilized.

### **Examples of insufficient contingency plan:**

- 1) The placement unit will need to find another placement.
- 2) Child will be made a state ward and placed into foster care.
- 3) This is an out of home safety plan and there is not a need for a backup plan.
- 4) The assigned caseworker should be contacted.
- 5) Their designee will take over
- 6) None

- Suitability of the safety plan participants was completed in 7 out of 8 (87.5%) of the assessments.
  - Reviewer judged that there was sufficient information to support the decision made with regards to the suitability of the safety plan participants in 6 out of 8 (75.0%) of the safety plans.
    - *Reviewer Comments: Need to ensure suitability is completed for all participants including two-parent foster families, providers and informal supports. When appropriate, suitability must include background checks.*
- 8 out of 8 (100.0%) safety plans addressed who was going to make sure the child was protected.
- 2 out of 8 (25.0%) safety plans addressed what action is needed.
- 5 out of 8 (62.5%) safety plans addressed where the plan and action are going to take place.
- 0 out of 8 (0.0%) safety plans addressed when the action will be finished.
- 3 out of 8 (37.5%) safety plans addressed how it is all going to work and how the actions are going to control for safety.
- 0 out of 8 (0.0%) safety plans did not contain caregiver promissory commitments.
- 3 out of 8 (37.5%) safety plans involved in home services.
- 8 out of 8 (100.0%) safety plans contained a plan for oversight.
  - Reviewers determined that the oversight requirements were sufficient to assure that the safety plan was implemented in accordance with expectation and was assuring child safety in 1 out of 8 (12.5%) of the reviewed safety plans.
- 8 out of 8 (100%) safety plans adjusted as threats increased or decreased.
- Overall, 0% (0 out of 8) safety plans were judged to be appropriate by Reviewers.

### **Protective Capacity Assessment:**

- At the time of the review, none of the 8 applicable assessments contained a finalized copy of the Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA).
  - **Reviewer Comments:** *As a reminder, the begin date for the PCA is to be within 7 days of the completion of the safety assessment. The PCA should be completed and documented on N-FOCUS within 60 days of initial custody date or 60 days from the begin date of the initial safety assessment, which ever is sooner.*



Conditions of Return:

- At the time of the review, none of the 4 applicable assessments included a finalized copy of the Conditions of Return.
  - **Reviewer Comments:** *Conditions of Return are to be started for all children likely to be out of the home longer than 30 days as soon as we know enough about the family to make decisions (this usually means the PCA has been started) and when the family has begun making changes and demonstrating that they are going to make progress. It needs to be completed and documented on N-F within 60 calendar days of removal.*

***Reviewer's Overall Analysis and Conclusion of the Work:***

<b>Category</b>	<b>WSA*B 1</b>	<b>WSA*B 2</b>	<b>WSA*B 3</b>	<b>Brooks 1</b>	<b>Brooks 2</b>	<b>Brooks 3</b>	<b>Eby 1</b>	<b>Eby 2</b>	<b>Eby 3</b>	<b>Peterson 1</b>	<b>Peterson 2</b>	<b>Peterson 3</b>	<b>Seelmeier 1</b>	<b>Seelmeier 2</b>	<b>Seelmeier 3</b>
The Nebraska Safety Assessment Instrument was completed correctly and completely	27%	25%	30%	13%	0%	20%	47%	40%	20%	33%	50%	80%	13%	20%	0%
Documentation is on N-FOCUS	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%
Required Time Frames were met	73%	80%	80%	80%	50%	80%	73%	80%	60%	80%	100%	100%	60%	100%	80%
A reasonable level of effort was expended given the identified safety concerns.	75%	55%	45%	53%	50%	60%	87%	100%	40%	73%	50%	80%	87%	20%	0%
Safety of the child/youth was assured during the assessment process.	83%	60%	80%	67%	67%	80%	93%	100%	80%	73%	50%	80%	100%	20%	80%
Sufficient information was gathered for informed decision making	60%	42%	40%	40%	33%	40%	80%	80%	40%	47%	50%	80%	73%	20%	0%
Available written documentation was obtained from law enforcement and others as appropriate.	50%	100%	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	20%	N/A	N/A
ICWA information was documented	63%	80%	80%	20%	50%	80%	87%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	47%	80%	60%
Information was obtained about non-custodial parent, relatives, and other family support.	50%	45%	35%	13%	17%	80%	73%	100%	0%	67%	75%	60%	47%	0%	0%
An Immediate Protective Action was appropriately implemented to assure child safety.	70%	50%	100%	67%	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	60%	0%	N/A
A Safety Plan was appropriately completed and implemented to assure child safety.	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	40%	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	17%	0%	0%
A Safety Assessment was documented in accordance with required practice.	35%	35%	40%	13%	17%	40%	73%	60%	40%	33%	50%	80%	20%	20%	0%
A Protective Action was documented in accordance with required practice.	9%	0%	0%	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	0%	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	20%	0%	N/A
A Safety Plan was documented in accordance with required practice.	29%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	63%	40%	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%
The family network and others were appropriately involved in the gathering of information.	63%	63%	52.63%	29%	60%	20%	80%	80%	75%	60%	50%	60%	85%	60%	60%
The family networks and others were appropriately involved in developing Safety Plans.	79%	63%	100%	60%	0%	100%	100%	60%	100%	N/A	N/A	100%	80%	100%	100%
Policy and procedures related to safety intervention were followed.	63%	45%	65%	47%	33%	60%	80%	40%	60%	73%	50%	80%	53%	60%	60%
Safety plan is sufficient to protect child from threats of severe harm.	53%	63%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%	80%	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	40%	50%	0%
Efforts to coordinate with law enforcement were documented.	92%	100%	100%	88%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	82%	N/A	100%
Interview protocols were followed or reason for deviation were documented.	65%	45%	30%	47%	33%	40%	80%	40%	20%	73%	50%	60%	60%	60%	0%
The appropriate definition was used in making the case status determination.	85%	100%	95%	80%	100%	80%	93%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	87%	100%	100%
The finding was correctly documented in N-FOCUS	90%	100%	100%	87%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%	87%	100%	100%
Factual information supports the selected finding.	90%	95%	95%	87%	100%	80%	93%	100%	100%	87%	100%	100%	93%	80%	100%
Proof of certified notice to the alleged perpetrator in the file	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A